

Message Text

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21

ACTION EA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 1092

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR KS JA

SUBJECT: ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS

1. IN REVIEW OF ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS FOLLOWING RELEASE OF TWO JAPANESE STUDENTS, MOFA NORTHEAST ASIA DIVISION I CHIEF WOO MUN-KI TOLD EMBOFF FEB 20 THAT ROKG SEES NO CRITICAL PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE SAID ROK IS SATISFIED WITH GOJ REACTION TO RELEASE, INCLUDING DIET REMARKS BY FONMIN MIYAZAWA, WHO WAS QUOTED IN ROK PRESS AS HAVING SAID RELEASE HELPED REMOVE A MAJOR TROUBLE SPOT BETWEEN ROK AND JAPAN. PRESS REPORTED THAT MIYAZAWA SAID GOJ HAD NO INTENTION OF LODGING PROTEST WITH ROKG OVER STUDENTS, AND WOO INDICATED THAT MOFA REGARDS MATTER CLOSED.

2. PRESS HAS ALSO REPORTED THAT MIYAZAWA INDICATED TO DIET THAT ROK-JAPAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE COULD NOT BE HELD UNTIL ALL PENDING ISSUES, INCLUDING KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE, ARE SETTLED. WOO NOTED THIS AND SAID THAT MOFA IS STILL STUDYING FONMIN'S REMARKS. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT IT IS IMPRACTICAL TO HOLD MINISTERIAL MEETING BEFORE LATE SPRING IN ANY EVENT AND THAT ROK FEELS MEETING CAN BE HELD.

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3. ON OTHER ISSUES, WOO SAID THAT MOFA WAS NOT HAPPY WITH REPORT THAT MIYAZAWA HAD SUGGESTED ON FEB 18 THAT JURISDICTION OVER DISPUTED ISLAND OF TOK-TO BE SETTLED BY INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE IF NOT THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT MOFA REALIZED THAT FONMIN COULD NOT STATE IN DIET THAT ISLAND BELONGS TO ROK, AND MOFA THEREFORE DECIDED NOT TO MAKE ANY OFFICIAL REACTION TO MIYAZAWA'S COMMENT. REGARDING JAPANESE ARREST OF ROK TRAWLER IN JAPAN'S EXCLUSIVE FISHING ZONE FEB 14, THE FIRST SUCH ARREST SINCE BILATERAL FISHING AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED IN 1965, WOO SAID THAT CASE HAS BEEN RESOLVED QUIETLY. INVESTIGATION REVEALED THAT ROK VESSEL HAD BEEN TRYING TO MAKE A RUN FOR ROK WATERS AFTER BEING BOARDED BY JAPANESE MARITIME SAFETY AGENCY OFFICIAL FOR INSPECTION AND HAD CLEARLY COMMITTED SERIOUS VIOLATION OF JAPANESE LAW.
SNEIDER

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